



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

116th Congress

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November 25, 2020

Dear Colleague,

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus is proud to endorse Congressman Jim Costa for Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. A sixteen-year veteran of the Committee, Congressman Costa has the knowledge, experience, and passion to elevate issues important to the American people. His top priority for the Agriculture Committee is to ensure no American goes hungry. So much of what our Caucus stands for is touched by the Committee, from hunger and nutrition, to growth of rural economies, and advocating for farmworkers and farmers. We have seen Congressman Costa's leadership firsthand and know he would be a great asset to our country if given the opportunity to serve as Chair.

During the 2018 Farm Bill, Congressman Costa chaired the Hispanic Caucus's Agriculture Taskforce to advocate for the needs of Hispanics living across the country. This included protecting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, promoting economic opportunity in rural America, funding for socially disadvantaged farmers and combating climate change through conservation programs. As the Chair of the Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture he has pursued accountability from USDA on their use of the Defense Production Act and pushed for increased worker protections in meatpacking facilities. Congressman Costa has worked on three Farm Bills and brought his expertise to two conference committees. His work on agriculture conservation programs in the 2018 Farm Bill was seen as a great leap forward for regional and on-farm conservation practices. He knows what farmers face every day, making him uniquely qualified to listen, learn and work with farmers to promote stronger environmental and conservation standards. Farmers have a significant role to play in combating climate change, and Congressman Costa can be the national leader to advance this role.

Earlier this year, Congressman Costa worked with the United Farm Workers and other farmworker stakeholders to advocate for protections in the Heroes Act. Together we pushed for these essential workers to receive enough personal protective equipment, housing, hazard pay, and protected status if undocumented. He also assisted with the crafting of the Farm Workforce Modernization Act by helping bring farmers and farmworkers together to reach a historic bipartisan compromise for immigration reform.

These examples and more show the extent of Congressman Costa's knowledge of the issues. He approaches the work of the Committee in a wholistic sense, knowing that the entire food supply chain must work for food to make it to our tables each day.

The Agriculture Committee is well positioned to speak to the needs of Hispanic and rural Americans. Congressman Costa is a third-generation family farmer, but his grandparents and parents started off as farm workers. After years of work they were able to establish a small dairy farm in the San Joaquin Valley. His story is the American story. The desire to make his story possible for the next generation motivates his work every day. We have full confidence that Congressman Costa will bring the leadership necessary to move the Agriculture Committee forward and therefore respectfully ask our colleagues to support Congressman Jim Costa in his bid to become Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture.

Sincerely,

Ruben Gallego
First Vice-Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Second Vice-Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus